

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 11515

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: ASEAN, JA
SUBJECT: JAPAN-ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

REF: TOKYO 10171, MANILA 10387, BANGKOK 17854

1. SUMMARY: MOFA BELIEVES JUNE 17 JAPAN-ASEAN MINISTERIAL
RESULTED IN INCREASED ASEAN APPRECIATION OF JAPANESE
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ROLE IN REGION, BETTER MUTUAL
UNDERSTANDING IN SPECIFIC AREAS OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION,
AND HEIGHTENED MUTUAL AWARENESS OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL
POLITICAL-ECONOMIC CONTEXT WITHIN WHICH JAPAN-ASEAN DIALOGUE
TAKES PLACE. JAPANESE DISCERNED UNDERSTANDING ON PART OF
ASEAN WITH RESPECT TO PROGRESS OR LACK THEREOF ON INDUSTRIAL
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PROJECTS, EXPRESSED QUALIFIED SUPPORT FOR COMMON FUND AND
STABEX, AND PLEDGED CONTINUING BEST EFFORTS CONCERNING
TRADE PREFERENCES. ON POLITICAL SIDE SONODA BRIEFED
ASEAN MINISTERS ON JAPAN-U.S. RELATIONS, EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE
PFT WITH CHINA, AND JAPANESE POLICY TOWARD INDOCHINA. MOFA
THOUGHT ATMOSPHERE OF MEETING WAS GOOD, AND THAT EXCELLENT
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WERE ESTABLISHED. SONODA'S

PERFORMANCE WAS CONSIDERED MOST EFFECTIVE. END SUMMARY

2. JUNE 17 JAPAN-ASEAN BILATERAL CONSISTED OF FORMAL MORNING SESSION FOLLOWED BY LENGTHY WORKING LUNCH. PROCEEDINGS WERE CONDUCTED IN RELAXED ATMOSPHERE (TIES WERE BANNED) AND FORMAT WAS RELATIVELY UNSTRUCTURED. MEETING CONSISTED OF FOUR BROAD AGENDA AREAS: JAPAN'S ROLE IN ASIA AND JAPANESE DIPLOMACY WORLDWIDE, INCLUDING RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.; WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION AND PROSPECTS FOR BONN SUMMIT; JAPAN-ASEAN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING FOLLOW-UP TO FUKUDA COMMITMENTS; INTRA-ASEAN DEVELOPMENTS OVER PAST YEAR. SONODA TOOK LEAD ON FIRST TWO ITEMS; THIRD ITEM WAS SHARED, AND ASEAN MINISTERS BRIEFED ON FOURTH. LUNCHEON DISCUSSION WAS DEVOTED TO REGIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES. HIGHLIGHTS OF MEETING AND LUNCHEON CONVERSATIONS, AS RECOUNTED TO EMBOFFS BY REGIONAL POLICY DIVISION DIRECTOR SEKI, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

3. JAPAN'S ROLE IN REGION, U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS:
SONODA SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE JAPANESE RECOGNITION OF SEA AS DIVERSE REGION WHICH JAPANESE WERE MAKING GENUINE EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND. SONODA'S PURPOSE, SAID SEKI, WAS TO DRAW EXPLICIT DISTINCTION BETWEEN MODERN JAPANESE APPROACH TO REGION AND WORLD WAR II POLICY FOUNDED ON MYTH OF COMMON ASIAN IDENTITY. SONODA ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT JAPAN RECOGNIZED ITS RESPONSIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO ECONOMIC CONFIDENTIAL

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PROGRESS OF ENTIRE REGION, AND THAT IT INTENDED TO ACT ACCORDINGLY. IN DISCUSSING U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS, SONODA BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED CARTER-FUKUDA MEETING IN MAY EMPHASIZING DETERMINATION OF BOTH SIDES TO COOPERATE IN EFFORT TO RESOLVE WORLD ECONOMIC IMBALANCES. HE NOTED FUKUDA'S PLEDGES TO REDUCE BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS SURPLUS AND ACHIEVE 7 PERCENT GROWTH AND RECALLED THAT PRESIDENT HAD RECOGNIZED U.S. RESPONSIBILITY TO CURB INFLATION. SONODA TOLD MINISTERS HE WAS CONVINCED U.S. WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN PRESERVATION OF REGIONAL SECURITY, AND HE FELT U.S. WAS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE MORE EFFECTIVELY TO REGIONAL PROSPERITY. IN THIS CONNECTION SONODA SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO SUCCESS OF U.S.-ASEAN DIALOGUE. HE ALSO NOTED POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FRG AND AUSTRALIA COULD MAKE TO REGION.

4. WORLD ECONOMY AND BONN SUMMIT:

SONODA OFFERED GOJ VIEW OF WORLD ECONOMIC SITUATION AND PROSPECTS FOR BONN SUMMIT. ALTHOUGH ASEAN MINISTERS EXPRESSED ONLY LIMITED INTEREST IN MACRO-ECONOMIC SUBJECTS, JAPANESE SIDE DISCERNED ASEAN APPRECIATION FOR INDICATION

GIVEN BY SONODA THAT GOJ WOULD BEAR ASEAN CONCERNS IN MIND IN ITS PARTICIPATION IN FORUMS WHERE ASEAN WAS NOT REPRESENTED (I.E., BONN SUMMIT AS WELL AS OTHER DC GATHERINGS). ASEAN MINISTERS ASKED THAT GOJ CONVEY ASEAN ECONOMIC CONCERNS, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO THREAT OF PROTECTIONISM, TO BONN SUMMIT, AND EMPHASIZED NEED FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES TO AVOID SOLUTIONS DISADVANTAGEOUS TO LDCS.

5. ASEAN MINISTERS ASKED THAT JAPAN TAKE LEAD AMONG

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INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES IN DEVELOPING SUPPORT FOR COMMON FUND; SONODA AGREED, ASKING IN RETURN THAT ASEAN ATTEMPT TO TAKE LEAD AMONG OTHER LDCS IN DEVELOPING MORE RESPONSIBLE AND BROADLY ACCEPTABLE POSITION.

6. JAPAN-ASEAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS:

SONODA OPENED THIS PORTION OF MEETING WITH RATHER DETAILED RUNDOWN ON JAPANESE PERFORMANCE IN MEETING COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN LAST YEAR BY FUKUDA. (MOFA IS IN PROCESS OF DEVELOPING DETAILED STATEMENT OF GOJ FOLLOW-UP TO FUKUDA VISIT, IN FORMAT NOT UNLIKE STRAUSS-USHIBA PROGRESS

REPORTS.) SEKI THOUGHT THAT THBDE WAS GENERAL MEETING OF MINDS WITH RESPECT TO MOST JAPAN-ASEAN ECONOMIC QUESTIONS. HE SAID ASEAN MINISTERS HAD TACITLY ADMITTED AND RECOGNIZED THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SLOW IMPLEMENTATION
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OF MAJOR ASEAN INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS LAY WITH ASEAN RATHER THAN JAPAN. HE NOTED THAT STATUS OF THESE PROJECTS WAS SUBJECT OF INTENSIVE INTRA-ASEAN DISCUSSION, RESULO OF WHICH WERE NOT FULLY REVEALED TO JAPANESE SIDE.

7. IN RESPONSE TO ASEAN MINISTERS' HOPE THAT JAPAN WOULD SUPPORT STABEX SCHEME, SONODA SAID THAT JAPANESE SIDE WOULD BE QUITE WILLING TO SUPPORT SUCH A SYSTEM WHEN AND IF ITS FEASIBILITY WERE PROVEN. HE REGRETTED THAT EXPERTS MEETING WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO REVIEW STABEX IN DETAIL HAD BEEN CANCELLED. (SEKI SAID REASON FOR CANCELLATION WAS REFUSAL OF PHILIPPINE DELEGATION TO ATTEND. THERE WAS NO AGREEMENT IN PATTAYA AS TO WHEN IT MIGHT BE RESCHEDULED, BUT SEKI WAS CERTAIN THAT IT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER.) SEKI SAID THAT SONODA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD STABEX WAS "MORE THAN NEUTRAL," AND THAT HE GENUINELY BELIEVED IT AN AREA OF COOPERATION WHICH SHOULD BE PURSUED. HE ALSO RECOGNIZED, HOWEVER, THAT CAREFUL JOINT STUDIES WOULD HAVE TO PRECEDE ITS IMPLEMENTATION. IF ITS FEASIBILITY WERE PROVEN, SEKI THOUGHT SONODA WOULD BE INCLINED TO GO AHEAD.

8. SONODA REGRETTED THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO OFFER ASEAN MINISTERS ANYTHING CONCRETE IN TRADE LIBERALIZATION. HE TOLD MINISTERS THAT WHILE IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO HAVE ACHIEVED INTRA-GOJ AGREEMENT IN TIME FOR PATTAYA MEETING, RESULTS OF FORCING ISSUE IN THAT FASHION WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGEOUS FOR ASEAN. SONODA PLEDGED HIS CONTINUED BEST EFFORTS IN MTN CONTEXT TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTORY MEASURES.

9. FOURTH ITEM ON MORNING AGENDA WAS BRIEFING BY ASEAN MINISTERS ON REGIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS OF
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THE PAST YEAR, IN TERMS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF JUNE 16 ASEAN COMMUNIQUE.

10. IN LUNCHEON CONVERSATIONS SONODA DESCRIBED HIS EFFORTS TO CONCLUDE PFT WITH PRC. SONODA SAID ANTI-HEGEMONY CLAUSE,

WHICH HAS BEEN MAJOR OBSTACLE FOR GOJ, COULD HAVE POSITIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION. JAPAN AND PRC WOULD PLEDGE TO FOREGO HEGEMONY THEMSELVES, AND WOULD OPPOSE HEGEMONIC AMBITIONS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, WHICH COULD ONLY REDOUND TO BENEFIT OF REGION ITSELF. SONODA SAID HE HOPED TO VISIT PEKING FOR DISCUSSIONS ON TREATY PRIOR TO HIS ATTENDANCE AT BONN SUMMIT. HE ASSERTED THAT CONCLUSION OF PFT WOULD NOT SERIOUSLY AFFECT JAPAN-SOVIET TIES.

11. SONODA DESCRIBED JAPAN'S RECENTLY CONCLUDED DEBT NEGOTIATIONS WITH SRV, AND SAID THAT JAPANESE AID TO VIETNAM WOULD BE GIVEN IN CONSULTATION WITH ASEAN. ASEAN MINISTERS ASKED SONODA'S VIEWS CONCERNING VIETNAM'S PROPOSAL FOR ZONE OF PEACE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. SONODA SAID JAPAN WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ASEAN FORMULATION OF THAT CONCEPT. SONODA ALSO DESCRIBED RESENT IENG SARY VISIT TO TOKYO. ASEAN MINISTERS DISPLAYED INTEREST IN (AND IMPLICIT CONCERN ABOUT) JAPAN'S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH INDOCHINA. ASKED TO CHARACTERIZE JAPANESE BUSINESS INTERESTS IN VIETNAM, SONODA NOTED KEIDANREN DELEGATION HAD RECENTLY VISITED THERE, AND THAT THERE WAS JAPANESE INVESTMENT INTEREST, BUT NOT ON MAJOR SCALE. ASEAN MINISTERS EMPHASIZED NEED FOR JAPAN TO BEAR IN MIND POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BALANCE BETWEEN INDOCHINA AND ASEAN COUNTRIES, AND ABSOLUTE NECESSITY TO INSURE THAT JAPANESE AID TO INDOCHINA COULD NOT BE UTILIZED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES, SONODA SAID THIS WAS FULLY UNDERSTOOD.

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12. SONODA WAS ALSO ASKED DURING LUNCH TO DESCRIBE U.S.- JAPAN COOPERATION IN ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, AS DISCUSSED IN CARTER-FUKUDA MEETING, AND DID SO IN SOME DETAIL. ASKED WHAT JAPAN WAS DOING TO ASSIST INDOCHINA REFUGEES, SONODA NOTED RECENT INCREASED CONTRIBUTION TO UNHCR AND GOJ PLANS TO RESETTLE SMALL NUMBER OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ON PERMANENT BASIS.

13. IN SUMMARIZING WHAT MOFA CLEARLY CONSIDERED TO HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL ENCOUNTER, SEKI IDENTIFIED SEVERAL SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

-- SONODA WAS ABLE TO EXPLAIN MORE THOROUGHLY THAN EVER BEFORE NATURE OF JAPAN'S APPROACH TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA, PUTTING JAPAN-ASEAN DIALOGUE IN BROADER REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CONTEXT;
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-- WITH RESPECT TO JAPAN-ASEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION, WHICH GOJ RECOGNIZED REMAINED CHIEF INTEREST OF ASEAN MINISTERS, JAPANESE SIDE WAS ABLE TO UNDERSCORE GENUINE GOJ DESIRE FOR MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIP AND DETERMINATION TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON FUKUDA COMMITMENTS;

-- LESS TANGIBLE ASPECTS OF JAPAN-ASEAN RELATIONSHIP, WHAT FUKUDA HAD CHARACTERIZED A YEAR AGO AS "HEART-TO-HEART" DIPLOMACY, WERE GIVEN MORE MEANING IN COURSE OF THIS INFORMAL AND FRIENDLY MEETING;

-- JAPAN'S STATUS AS PARTNER WITH ASEAN IN PRESENTING ASEAN VIEWS TO ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES WAS BUTTRESSED.

14. ASKED TO ELABORATE ON LATTER POINT, SEKI SAID THAT GOJ RECOGNIZED ASEAN HAD NOT ASKED JAPAN TO "REPRESENT THEM" IN SUCH FORUMS AS BONN SUMMIT, BUT MINISTERS HAD CLEARLY INDICATED THAT JAPAN SHOULD CONVEY THEIR CONCERNS, AND HAD REPOSED CONSIDERABLE CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN GOJ.

15. SEKI SAID GOJ WAS CONSIDERING RESCHEDULING SONODA VISITS TO INDIVIDUAL ASEAN CAPITALS FOLLOWING BONN SUMMIT AS NEXT LIKELY STEP IN JAPAN-ASEAN DIALOGUE. HE NOTED THAT SONODA WAS BECOMING ONE OF GOJ'S MOST WIDELY TRAVELED

FOREIGN MINISTERS, AND SAID IT WAS GROWING VIEW WITHIN MOFA THAT HE WAS ONE OF MOST EFFECTIVE AS WELL. SEKI ATTRIBUTED SUCCESS IN PATTAYA IN LARGE PART TO SONODA'S LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF JAPAN'S VIEWS.

16. COMMENT: MOFA OBVIOUSLY REGARDED PATTAYA MEETING AS WORTHY FOLLOW-UP TO FUKUDA-ASEAN TOUR OF 1977. WHILE WE DOUBT ASEAN GOVERNMENTS WOULD GIVE GOJ AS HIGH MARKS AS IT CONFIDENTIAL

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HAS GIVEN ITSELF WITH RESPECT TO FULFILLING FUKUDA COMMITMENTS, JAPANESE CAN MAKE GOOD CASE. JAPANESE PERHAPS ALSO OVERESTIMATE DEGREE TO WHICH NON-TRADE AND AID ASPECTS OF JAPAN-ASEAN DIALOGUE HAVE PROGRESSED. IN ANY EVENT, THERE CLEARLY HAS BEEN NO DIMINUTION IN GOJ ENTHUSIASM FOR DEVELOPMENT OF BROADER RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA. MANSFIELD

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